

# Substance Abuse Treatment and Substance Use in Massachusetts – FY '04

Massachusetts Department of Public Health Bureau of Substance Abuse Services

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Due to reductions in program capacity, admissions dropped by 13,670 (from 115,896 in FY'03 to 102,226 in FY'04).
- Admissions to Acute Treatment Services (detox) decreased by 26.8% (from 50,818 in FY'03 to 37,200 in FY'04).
- Admissions to Outpatient Services decreased 1.7% (from 47,756 in FY'03 to 46,952 in FY'04).
- In FY 2004, past year heroin users constituted the second largest proportion of all adult admissions (42.7%); alcohol was the first (66.7%).
- 8% of Massachusetts adults reported illicit drug use in the past month (2002 BRFSS).<sup>1</sup>
- 8% of Massachusetts adults reported heavy drinking in the past month (2002 BRFSS).
- The 2003 National Survey on Drug Use and Health ranks New England as the region highest in current (past 30 days), past year, and heavy alcohol use, as well as the region highest in current and past year illicit drug use.

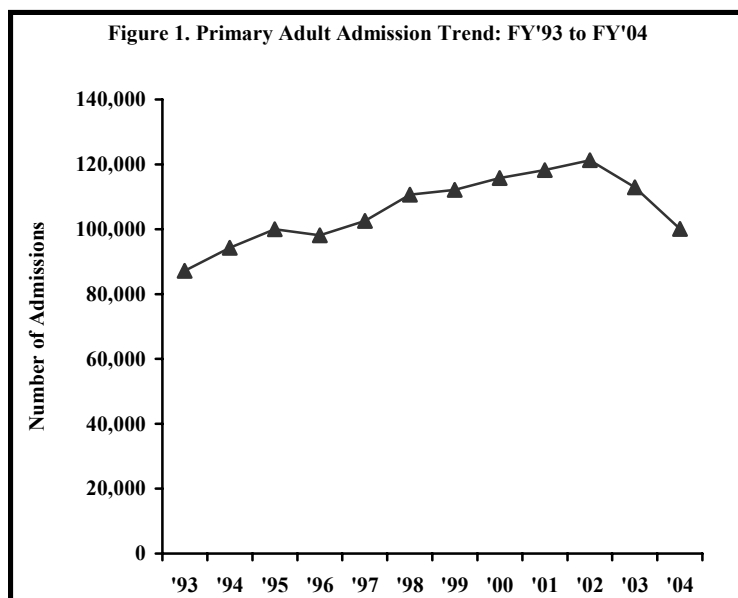


Figure 1. Illustrates the admission trend for adults 18 years and older to short term (detox) and long term residential and outpatient services for Fiscal Years 1993 through 2004. The decline in the number of admissions reflects a reduction in program capacity rather than a decrease in need for services.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF TREATMENT ADMISSIONS

From FY 2003 to FY 2004:

- Adult admissions reporting past year heroin use decreased marginally as a proportion of all adult admissions from 43.2% to 42.7%
- Adult homeless admissions decreased as a proportion of all adult admissions from 20.67% to 18.62%, while the proportion of pregnant women who reported to be homeless increased from 23.4 to 30.8
- Total female admissions increased as a proportion of all adult admissions from 27.4% to 29.8%
- Adolescent admissions decreased as a proportion of all admissions from 2.6% to 2.1%.

<sup>1</sup> The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a continuous, random-digit-dial telephone survey of adults' age 18 and older, and is conducted in all states as a joint collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the State Departments of Health. The survey has been in the field of Massachusetts since 1986. The BRFSS collects data on a variety of health characteristics, risk factors for chronic conditions, and preventative behaviors.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

From FY 2003 to FY 2004:

- Admissions that were employed at the time of admission increased as a proportion of the total number of adult admissions from 24%% to 25.8%.

## **MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT**

From FY 2003 to FY 2004:

- The proportion of adult pregnant women who reported prior mental health treatment decreased modestly, from 51.2 % to 50.4 %.
- All other populations experienced an increase.
- In FY 2004, Adult pregnant women reported the highest proportion of admissions with prior mental health treatment (50.4%), followed by adolescents (46.9%) and adult women (45.9%). Adult IDU (Intravenous Drug Use) had the lowest proportion of admissions reporting prior mental health treatment (27.7%).

## **PRIMARY DRUG USE** *Primary drug is the drug for which the client is seeking treatment.*

In FY 2004:

- *Heroin*: Adult IDU (89.7%) and past year heroin users (86.4 %) had the highest proportion of admissions reporting heroin as their primary drug, followed by pregnant women (54.4%). Adolescents reported the lowest proportion (4.5%).
- *Cocaine/Crack*: Adult pregnant women (17.0%) and adult women (10.2%) had the highest proportion of admissions reporting cocaine/crack as their primary drug, followed by adult homeless admissions (7.8 %). Older adults, 55 years or older (2.5%) and IDU (2.5%) reported the lowest proportions.
- *Marijuana*: Adolescents (55.9%) had the highest proportion of admissions reporting marijuana as their primary drug, followed by adult pregnant women (6.5%) and adult women (3.8%). Adult past year heroin users (0.6 %) and adult

IDU (0.4%) reported the lowest proportions.

- *Alcohol*: Older adults, 55 years or older, (78.1%) had the highest proportion of admissions reporting alcohol as their primary drug, followed by adult women (36.9%) and adult homeless (36.0%).
- *Other drugs*: Pregnant women (9.1%) had the highest proportion of admissions reporting other drugs (any drug other than those mentioned above) as their primary drug, followed by adult women (8.8%) and adolescents (8.7%).

## **PAST YEAR USE OF DRUGS**

In FY 2004:

### *Adult Admissions*

- 60.2% of adult admissions used more than one drug in the past year.

### *Adolescent Admissions*

- Past year use of marijuana, PCP/other hallucinogens, amphetamines/other stimulants, barbiturates, inhalants, and over the counter drugs was the highest among adolescents.
- 69% of adolescent admissions used more than one drug in the past year.

### *Pregnant Women*

- Proportion of admissions reporting past year use of cocaine/crack and other opiates/synthetics (includes Oxycontin) was the highest among pregnant women